



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

DULUTH MAN SENTENCED TO 27 MONTHS IN CHILD PORN CASE

Investigation based on lead from National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

DULUTH, Minn.— A local man was sentenced in federal court today to 27 months in prison for possession of child pornography, the result of an investigation conducted by the Duluth Police Department and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents.

Daniel Vear Markee, 45, was sentenced in U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota by Judge Richard H. Kyle to 27 months in prison and three years of supervised release. Markee is also required to pay a \$5,000 penalty and a \$100 special assessment.

The investigation began when the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) forwarded a lead to the Duluth Police Department concerning possible Internet child pornography offenses. The police requested assistance from local ICE special agents, who participated in serving a search warrant at Markee's residence in April 2003. ICE conducted forensic analysis of his computer's hard drive and presented the case to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota for prosecution. Assistant United States Attorney Erica MacDonald prosecuted the case.

Markee was subsequently charged with one count of possession of child pornography. Specifically, he was charged with having ten or more images involving a prepubescent minor and a minor under the age of 12 on his computer, according to court documents. Markee pleaded guilty to the charge Dec. 30, 2004.

"ICE is committed to protecting the most vulnerable among us, our children," said Resident Agent-in-Charge Brett Braaten of the ICE office in Duluth. "We will continue to work closely with our law enforcement partners to take these criminals off the streets."

Markee's prosecution is part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was

launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 6,000 individuals, including 188 in Minnesota, making it one of the top ten states in the country for apprehensions.

Operation predator targets four different types of violators:

Foreign National Child Predators: More than 85 percent of the arrests in Operation Predator involve foreign national sex offenders whose crimes make them removable from the United States. To date, more than 2,100 of these foreign-born predators have been removed from the United States to their home nations. As part of this process, ICE advises the host nation governments about the criminal histories of each sex predator it is deporting to their nations. ICE also issues Green Notices through Interpol in appropriate cases. The Green Notice provides information on career criminals who have committed, or are likely to commit, offenses in several countries.

International Child Sex Tourists: Working cooperatively with foreign governments through ICE's attaché offices worldwide, ICE agents have made 14 arrests under the child sex tourism provisions of the PROTECT Act.

Human Smuggling & Trafficking of Children: The criminal networks engaged in human smuggling and trafficking have become more violent and more profit-driven than ever before. At the same time, some of their victims are getting younger and younger.

Internet Child Pornography: Drawing on ICE's cyber crime investigative expertise, ICE is tackling the crimes that cross the nation's virtual borders. One massive investigation resulted in more than 1,200 arrests worldwide, and marks the first time the government has gone after the financial side of child pornography. Moreover, through the National Child Victim Identification System, more than 2,100 pornographic images containing child pornography have been authenticated.

ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.